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# The Annals of Iowa

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## In This Issue

MICHAEL S. HEVEL, a doctoral candidate in the higher education program at the University of Iowa, describes the role of literary societies at Cornell College, the State University of Iowa, and the Iowa State Normal School in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He argues that those societies provided opportunities for students to display publicly, in a variety of changing formats over the years, their higher learning. Through their programs, society members demonstrated their educational gains, improved their speaking abilities, and practiced the cultural arts. In addition, society members were instrumental in creating features of campus life that endure to the present.

BREANNE ROBERTSON analyzes Lowell Houser's entry in the competition to create a mural for the Ames Post Office in 1935. She argues that his choice of Mayan subject matter, drawing on a contemporary fascination with Mexican culture in both subject and style, distinguished his work among a strong pool of applicants in the competition, and the execution of his mural sketch, which adhered to traditional notions of history painting, demonstrated a technical and thematic expertise that fulfilled the lofty aims of the selection committee and ultimately won for him the competition.

## Front Cover

Members of the Orio Literary Society at Iowa State Normal School staged a dramatic production of *Louis' Last Moments with His Family* in 1897. For more on literary societies at Cornell College, the State University of Iowa, and the Iowa State Normal School, see Michael Hevel's article in this issue. Photo from University Archives, University of Northern Iowa.

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Marvin Bergman, editor

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